



STATE OF NEVADA
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
901 South Stewart Street, Suite 5004
Carson City, Nevada 89701-5247
Phone (775) 684-2760 - Fax (775) 684-2761

DRAFT MINUTES
STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION
5:00pm (MST) on Monday, October 20, 2008

And

At the conclusion of the NvACD Meeting Wednesday, October 22, 2008
Cactus Pete's Casino/Resort
1385 US Highway 93, Jackpot, NV 89825

The State Conservation Commission held a public meeting on Monday, October 20, 2008 at 5:00pm Mountain Standard Time (there was no quorum present and therefore no action taken at the meeting scheduled for Wednesday, October 22, 2008) in Jackpot, NV at Cactus Pete's Casino/Resort, 1385 US Highway 93, Jackpot, NV 89825.

The State Conservation Commission considered and acted upon the following items on Monday, October 20, 2008:

Board Member Present: Keith Whipple, Chairman – Lincoln County Conservation District; Joe Sicking, Vice-Chairman – Paradise-Sonoma Conservation District; Vance Vesco – Big Meadow Conservation District; Chris Freeman – Nevada Tahoe Conservation District; Dr. Rangesan Narayanan, Associate Dean – UNR College of Agriculture.

Board Members Absent: Donna Lamm – Southern Nye County Conservation District; Judy Currier – Conservation District of Southern Nevada; Eric Rieman – Carson Valley Conservation District; Ed Foster – Regional Manager, Nevada Department of Agriculture.

Others Present: Jim Lawrence, Executive Secretary – NV Division of Conservation Districts; Kelly McGowan – NV Division of Conservation Districts; Sandi Gotta – NV Division of Conservation Districts; Norman Vigil, Acting State Conservationist – Natural Resource Conservation Service; Rod Dahl – Natural Resources Conservation Service; Barbara Perlman-Whyman – Nevada Tahoe Conservation District; Michelle Langsdorf – Mason and Smith Valley Conservation Districts; Jessi Eckert – Lahontan and Stillwater Conservation Districts.

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Chairman Keith Whipple called the meeting to order at 5:15pm (MST). Introductions were made of those present.

II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA - *ACTION*

A. Joe Sicking made the motion to approve the agenda. Vance Vesco seconded the motion and the motion passed.

III. REVIEW, AMENDMENT AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES - *ACTION*

A. Joe Sicking made a motion to approve the minutes. Vance Vesco seconded the motion and the motion passed.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. Three minute time limit per person, limited to items not on the agenda.
 - 1. Keith Whipple thanked all of those who had sent him and his family cards, flowers and other items in memory of his wife who had passed away recently.

V. DIVISION REPORTS TO THE COMMISSION

- A. Status of the Division of Conservation Districts
 - 1. Fiscal Report – Jim Lawrence
 - a. Fiscal Year 2008 – Jim reviewed the ending balances of the Division's budget with the Commission. All of the districts received full grant funding in FY 2008 and many of the budget categories were fully expended. Those that were not, were reverted to the State's general fund. The largest reversions came from personnel and in-state travel. Each of these funds was purposely protected due to the uncertainty in the State's economy and possible future cuts to the budget. Jim commended Kelly and Sandi for their efforts in picking up the additional workload left by the unfilled vacancy of the administrative assistant.
 - 2. General – Jim Lawrence
 - a. Jim reported that the State's revenues continue to be weaker than projected and as a result the budget office requested all agencies to be prepared to submit additional budget cuts for consideration.
 - b. The Administrative Assistant II position has been approved to be filled at 51% of full time. We are cautiously waiting to see if additional cuts are requested before filling the position due to the latest projections in State revenue.
 - c. Even under these economic conditions the department Director, Allen Biaggi, stuck to his word and submitted a budget that included an administrator position for the division. Not surprisingly, it most likely will not be approved by the budget office.
 - 3. Conservation Districts Meeting Logs – Kelly McGowan & Sandi Gotta
 - a. Fiscal Year 2009 Minute and Agenda Logs – Review of the minute and agenda logs. All of the agendas and minutes received to date, have met the 30 working days requirement. With the AAIL position vacant, the logs may not be updated as frequently as in the past, but we will do our best, knowing how many of the districts view these logs to keep updated. These logs are located on the Division's website, <http://www.dcd.nv.gov/forms.htm>.
 - 4. General/Correspondence – Kelly McGowan & Sandi Gotta
 - a. Kelly – Kelly was pleased to report that all 28 districts met all requirements for good standing. The districts should be commended for their diligence and effort.
 - b. The amount of match from the districts' FY2008 financial reports.
 - i. The ratio of dollars generated by districts for every dollar of State grants they received from the Division of Conservation Districts was 17.49:1 for FY2008.
 - (a) Staff will work on getting the message out to districts about the importance of each of them reporting the in-kind match (non-cash) that the district is generating. Some that reported match last year did not include it in their financial report this year and vice-versa.
 - c. Sandi – Washington State has some excellent templates that can be modified for Nevada districts for filing financial reports and annual reports. They can be a more simplistic format than what is currently utilized by the

districts and they can also be used as an annual report of the division to the legislature. The Commission encouraged staff to present them to districts to replace the current formats.

VI. REPORTS TO THE COMMISSION

- A. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – Allen Biaggi
 - 1. Not present, no report was given.
- B. Department of Agriculture – Edward K. Foster
 - 1. Not present, no report was given.
- C. University of Nevada, Reno – Dr. Rangesan Narayanan
 - 1. Dr. Rang – The current administration at the University are favorable to supporting the continued ownership and management of the main-station farms.
 - 2. They have been asked to cut 14% from their budget and may have to cut 21% of their budget. To reach these cuts they are not filling vacancies, they are combining programs, eliminating positions, and have discontinued their equestrian program. They are doing what they can to protect teaching positions.
 - 3. Dr. Rang reported on a program called 'Target 500', which is an initiative to increase new student enrollment at UNR by 500 students. He was pleased to report that the college of agriculture had the highest percent of increase, from 137 students to 205 students.
- D. Natural Resources Conservation Service – Norman Vigil
 - 1. Being that this was his first Commission meeting, Norman introduced himself. He was selected to serve as the Acting State Conservationist, until the position can be filled. Norman's permanent work station is in New Mexico.
 - 2. He expects that we should receive news within a week or two on who has been selected to serve as the new State Conservationist for NRCS in Nevada.
 - 3. The agency nationwide continues to operate on a continuing resolution for their discretionary funding. This may continue until March 2009. They are being advised to be very conservative with the discretionary funding.
 - 4. Some of the rules for the 2008 Farm Bill have been completed and are currently under review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).
 - 5. The new Farm Bill allows for greater participation under the 'Local Working Group' umbrella. Essentially, any interested person, group, or agency can participate.
 - 6. OMB is currently conducting a standing audit of NRCS's current operating procedures, financial reporting, and accountability.
 - 7. He thanked the commission for their time and looking forward to the NvACD annual meeting over the next few days.
- E. Attorney General's Office – Nhu Nguyen
 - 1. Not present, no report was given.
- F. Farm Service Agency – Roger Van Valkenburg
 - 1. Not present, no report was given.
- G. Nevada Association of Conservation Districts – Patsy Tomera
 - 1. Not present, no report was given.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. **Review and approval of all Conservation Districts Final Financial Reports for FY 2008 NAC 548.090, 548.110 - *ACTION***
 - 1. Tonopah Conservation District – The Tonopah CD did not submit a Draft Financial Report in July, therefore the Commission did not take any action on

state grant issuance. However, the district did submit their Final Financial Report by the September 30, 2008 due date as required by NAC 548.110. After reviewing the report, Chairman Whipple asked staff if it met the regulatory requirements and staff advised him that it does meet the requirements. Joe Sicking made a motion to approve the Tonopah Conservation District's Final Financial Report and to approve them for full funding of \$5,000 from the Operational Grants to Districts program. Chris Freeman seconded the motion and the motion passed.

B. Review and approval of all Conservation Districts' Annual Reports for FY 2008 per NAC 548.100 - *ACTION*

1. The Commission reviewed all 28 conservation district annual reports. Keith asked staff if they had any comments or concerns with the reports. Staff advised the Commission that all reports were received by the September 30, 2008 due date. Some of the districts had utilized new formats this year that were aesthetically pleasing and informative. Staff intends to highlight the Conservation District of Southern Nevada, Mason Valley Conservation District, Smith Valley Conservation District, Nevada Tahoe Conservation District, and the Dayton Valley Conservation District annual reports by posting them to the division's website to assist districts that may be interested in changing the format of their district's report in the future. Vance Vesco made a motion to receive and file all 28 of the Districts' final financial reports for district good standing consideration for FY 2010.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Discussion on term limits for elected officials and who the districts should contact for clarification - *ACTION*

1. Jim Lawrence reported that he and staff had visited with Deputy Attorney General Nhu Nguyen, about term limits. She advised us that she serves the Commission and that term limits do not apply to them as they serve in appointed positions. She told us that we should advise the districts to contact the District Attorney in the county that serves them. They should be getting all of their legal advice from the district attorney. She did mention to us that one of the questions districts should be advised on is whether or not a district is considered a local governing body with the authority to make and enact regulations or laws. She also advised us that if the term limits do apply, they would apply retroactively to elected officials, who took office after November, 27, 1996.

Keith Whipple asked staff if we could offer a recommendation to the districts because the elections are 12 days away. Staff could only advise the districts to work with their local district attorneys even if it happens after elections are held.

Joe Sicking mentioned that he would like a copy of the 1996 Attorney General opinion that addressed this subject. Staff will locate the opinion and send him a copy.

B. Reminder that District Elections need to be held in the first 10 days in November, 2008.

1. Staff advised the Commission that all districts have been sent a memo reminding them of the elections this year. Each Chairman and employee of the districts has been sent the memo and all of the required elections forms. Election forms need to be submitted to the Commission by November 30.

I. STAFF ITEMS – Division Staff Comments

A. Division staff had no comments.

II. COMMISSIONER ITEMS

A. Dr. Rang asked staff if they would contact Scott Marsh with the State Department of Agriculture and ask him if there is an updated version of the proposed weed law available. If there is, he would like us to send each one of the Conservation Commissioners a copy of it and include it on the next Conservation Commission agenda.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. There was no public comment.

IV. NEXT COMMISSION MEETING - *ACTION*

A. The next Commission meeting is October 22, 2008 at 4:00pm or at the conclusion of the NvACD meeting in Jackpot, NV at.

V. ADJOURNMENT – to reconvene at the Cactus Pete’s Resort/Casino, 1385 US Highway 93, Jackpot, NV 89825, on Wednesday, October 22, 2008 at 4:00pm or at the conclusion of the NvACD meeting. - *ACTION*

A. Joe Sicking made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Vance Vesco and the motion passed. Keith Whipple adjourned the meeting at 6:00pm.

Note: ***ACTION*** Denotes items on which the Commission may take action. Action may occur on the topic or during the general Committee Discussion.

Draft Minutes
October 22, 2008:

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Board Members Absent: Keith Whipple, Chairman – Lincoln County Conservation District; Judy Currier – Conservation District of Southern Nevada; Eric Rieman – Carson Valley Conservation District; Dr. Rangesan Narayanan, Associate Dean – UNR College of Agriculture; Donna Lamm –

Southern Nye County Conservation District; Ed Foster – Regional Manager, Nevada Department of Agriculture.

Others Present: Jim Lawrence, Executive Secretary – NV Division of Conservation Districts; Kelly McGowan – NV Division of Conservation Districts; Sandi Gotta – NV Division of Conservation Districts.

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Vice-Chairman Joe Sicking had roll call and determined that there was not a quorum present. Therefore, there was no consideration of any action items nor was any action taken.

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